The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor concerning in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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Write Your Senators And Congressman To Fight Anti-Labor Bills

WHOLE NO. 1881 | WILLIAM GREEN, President | WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, APRIL 29, 1947 | GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer | VOL. 37, NO. 17

Plan To Cut Prices Given Encouraging But Varied Support In Big Cities

Washington, D. C.—Economic advisers to the Nation reported that an initial survey revealed the Newburyport, Mass., plan of a 10 percent across-the-board slash in retail prices has been receiving widely scattered support.

On the other hand a more basic and permanent price reduction than provided in the Newburyport plan was urged by consumers and some business leaders in New York, Washington and other leading cities.

Leon H. Keyserling, vice chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, said price cuts already made on some items were "encouraging" but did "not measure up to what needs to be done." He spoke over the Columbia Broadcasting System.

As President Truman's plans for price cutting received some industrial support, there appeared to be no clear-cut endorsement of his appeal by leaders of some of the Nation's basic supplies. In the General Electric Co., the Nation's largest manufacturer of electrical appliances and equipment, announced it would increase prices an average of seven percent.

In Newburyport, where the anti-inflation experiment originated, retail merchants reported sales climbed 40 percent above a normal Saturday, and attributed it to shoppers flocking in from surrounding communities to take advantage of lowered cuts.

The 10 percent cuts originally were scheduled to run for a brief period in that city, but sponsors of the idea considered indefinite continuance.

Reports were received in Washington and from almost every section of the Nation that merchants were slashing prices and instituting sales campaigns not only in their own cities but throughout surrounding areas.

Three retail chains cut prices 10 percent on soap and soap products in New York it was announced that the Merchants Association in the Bronx Grand Concourse section of New York City has been organized as an aggressive annual business of $100,000,000.

Meanwhile, reports from some of the key manufacturing industries indicated sharp reductions in wholesale prices of essentials. The situation eased over a wide variety of items including clothing, hardware and household items.

At the same time merchants' associations in many widely scattered areas throughout the Nation were in convening to approve reductions in retail prices ranging in some cases well above 10 percent.

Merchants in Pottstown, Pa., in a special message, informed President Truman that they "will start experiments 20 to 50 percent in a one-day experiment, which might be adopted for an entire month.

"His reductions now or recession later, and we cannot afford a recession," the Pottstown Chamber of Commerce wired Mr. Truman in a message indicating that the merchants would act on his plea for lower prices.

"Profit-sharing day," is what the Chamber is calling its experiment. Throughout the borough the price-cut fever has been spreading with the experiment will keep their stores open from morning 'til night to see how their customers react.

In New England price cuts ranging from 10 to 15 percent were in effect in over a dozen Stockton (65,000) and Fitchburg (42,000), Mass.; Nashua (30,000), Manchester (60,000) and Dover (15,000), N. H.; Springfield, Vt. (9,000), and Old Town, Me. (7,000).

In the Michigan section of Detroit the board of trade distributed 27,000 circulars in that area announcing a 10 percent cut.

Merchants in the northwest section of Detroit in Dearborn (62,000) and except for items covered by fair trades and similar action was not taken in Otsego (3500) and Hamtramck (50,000) communities in the city councils. Other isolated price-cutting moves were reported.

In Chicago, two merchants groups announced price cuts. In New Orleans, Louisiana, the retail merchants committee of the Chamber of Commerce called a meeting to discuss the President's anti-inflation plan for Crowley (10,000).

In Lake Charles, Louisiana, (15,000), Chamber of Commerce said 70 percent of the merchants in the area are drafting all noncontract priced goods 10 percent in price.

A Los Angeles city council appeal for a voluntary cut in all living costs brought scattered instances of price cuts. Some stores are basing their cuts in Culver City (9000) and the Los Angeles Harbor area (100,000) on the Sherman Oaks and Rodger Young Village.

Price reductions also were reported in Bakersfield, Redlands, Oxnard, Long Liberty, Mo.; Oklahoma City, Lawton and Ardmore, Okla.; Wagoner, Miami, Ponca City, Okla.; Boulder and Trinidad, Colo.; Cedar Rapids, Ames and Independence, Iowa; Clearwater, Fla.; Wickford, R. I.; Chester, Pa., and Seattle. Reports from these areas only one or two stores were involved.

Cautious Period In Hiring Is Indicated By Most Recent Study of USES Experts

Washington, D. C.—Some American industries "are entering a new quarter with doubts concerning their economic future," the United States Employment Service reported in declaring its most recent survey indicates that forces underlying business expansion "have lost their upward drive."

Nevertheless, Robert C. Goodwin, USES director, reported that total employment this spring will rise toward the 58,000,000 peak of last July. An increase of 2,000,000 persons in seasonal farm work and some gains in other industries will bring this about, he said, adding:

"Although a business dip later this year is a much discussed possibility, it seems clear that seasonal rises in demand for workers in agriculture, construction, food processing and certain other fields will tend to keep employment high during most, if not all, of the calendar year."

He noted, however, that employers are forecasting fewer hirings in the next few months than the actual estimates of their labor needs.

"Unpredictable consumer demands and fluctuating prices," along with continuing shortages of materials, have caused the trimming of hiring estimates submitted to the USES, he said.

"With working staffs largely built up, and with goods flowing through the industrial machine smoothly and in record volume, the factors making for industrial expansion have now lost their upward drive," the summary said.

"In some fields, forces pointing in the opposite direction are becoming increasingly noticeable. For the first time since 1939, a few of the major industries are entering a new quarter with doubts concerning their economic future.

"The time has "apparently come, particularly in some soft-goods lines and textiles, when the public will spend more difficult to maintain current rates of consumer goods output at present prices.

"Furthermore, the current price level is beginning to affect purchases even in fields, such as construction, where large backlogs exist.

"As a result, many business industries are now limiting hiring principally to replacement and seasonal purposes and are tying added care in making their selections."

Rent Controls Cancelled In 39 Areas; OPA Order Hits Families In 22 States

Washington, D. C.—Rent controls in 28 areas and in a portion of 11 others were discontinued in an unprecedented action by the Office of Price Administration. Twenty-two States were affected.

AFL spokesmen had cautioned against ending all rent control and had suggested that rental restrictions be removed gradually.

The decontrol, announced by the OPA branch of the Office of Temporary Controls, applies to all living accommodations in the listed areas, including apartments, hotels, trailer tourist camps and rooming houses.

Officials emphasized that the decontrol does not literally apply to the listed regions where a serious housing shortage prevails, like New York and Washington.

The estimated 1,241,065 persons will be affected by the decontrol order, leaving 102,948,281 persons in areas remaining under rent control. There are 126,243 rental units in the affected areas, as compared with 14,202,776 units remaining under control, OPA said.

The move was the most sweeping decontrol action since rent ceilings were clamped on June, 1942. OPA officials said, adding that the order contains safeguards to prevent "abuse" in controlling areas or portions when it does appear that the trend is going to longer exists."

OPA said that no further decontrol action is contemplated by the OPA next division level it is shifted on May 4 to the office of the Housing Expediter, Frank R. Creedon.

The rent decontrol action followed by overwhelming approval by the House Banking Committee of a bill ending any increase in rent ceilings prior to Dec. 31 at least.

The rent action affected localities in Colorado, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, Washington, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

AFL Carries Fight To People Against Punitive Labor Bills

Stage, Air and Film Stars To Fight Anti-Labor Bills

Washington, D. C.—Outstanding stars of Hollywood, the radio and the theater are going to bat against the Taft-Hartley anti-labor bills in conjunction with the American Federation of Labor's nation-wide drive to defeat this legislation.

All the entertainment unions affiliated with the AFL, together with the union of their press agents, volunteered at a special meeting Monday at AFL headquarters here to form a special committee to mobilize the talent in defense of organized labor's freedoms.

The committee, named to carry on an intensified series of radio programs, mass meetings and personal appearances from coast to coast, includes:

Actors' Equity Association—Edward J. McHale.
American Federation of Musicians—Harry Steeper.
American Federation of Radio Actors—George Heller.
American Guild of Variety Artists—Paul Dalsell.
American Guild of Musical Artists—Lawrence Tibbett.
American Federation of Television Artists—Zachary Zaccaro—Zac Freedman.
Radio Directors Guild—Ed Byron.

The committee met first meeting to map the campaign Wednesday at the headquarters of Actors Equity Association in New York City.

Increased Funds For School Lunches Approved By Spokesman For AFL

Washington, D. C.—A strong appeal for an appropriation of one hundred million dollars to feed school children was presented to the House Appropriations Committee by Walter J. Mason, an AFL legislative representative.

Declaring that the present fiscal year provision of $75,000,000 was inadequate, Mason said: "It also submitts the AFL "is in hearty accord" with the Committee's plan to provide $600 "to provide children with milk and improved lunches."

Calling attention to the fact that the Secretary of Agriculture had called $600,000,000 and that England, with only one-third the population of the United States, allocated $200,000,000 for the purpose, Mr. Mason told the committee:

"Our Nation is firmly committed to our public school system and has invested billions in providing additional opportunities for our future citizens. School lunch is a key child service and should be adequately maintained to make sure that every child has the nourishment necessary to make his school hours fruitful.

"We require parents to send boys and girls to school and where necessary provide transportation to facilitate compliance with school attendance laws, minimum standards assuring the children opportunities for health and development of intellectual capacities because the Nation considers its citizens as its most important asset.

"The Nation knows that many families rarely have adequate nutritional diets, eager to supply either necessity or no breakfast. Most children are physically spent, unable to buy adequate lunches or to eat such lunches if they could go home. Nutritional Service of the AFL and other labor groups report inadequate nutrition for children in large districts throughout the 24 to 84. The cooperative federal-state commodity program makes many possible nutritious hot food for all children—but no discrimination is attached. These lunches make all the differences in the world in physical and mental vigor of those who are normal growing children. School lunches are just as necessary to child health and development as other service functions—transportation, school books and medical examinations. In fact, without the lunch program other services cannot fulfill their full functions."

Ads Across Country Explain Position of American Unionism

Washington, D. C.—The Nation-wide battle of the American Federation of Labor for the defeat of the Hartley-Taft anti-union legislation, which labor leaders would strip American workers of gains obtained only after long years of heart-rending struggle, spread tentacles into the country this week as the Federation, through full-page advertisements in some 100 leading newspapers, presented its case in clear-cut terms.

The advertisements carried a simple message for workers to read—a plain appeal for their support to preserve the right of workers to deal collectively with their employers in seeking a living wage for themselves and their families.

In this message was expressed the firm determination of the American worker to resist attempts in Congress to place "steel chains" on the country's toiling millions who seek only a decent living standard.

The determination of the Federation to carry its message direct to all the people was reached at a meeting of the AFL Executive Council, which authorized the spending of $1,500,000 war chest to expose the doctored, anti-labor, anti-union legislative campaign fostered by labor-haters.

The aims of the Federation is not limited to the newspaper field. Plans are afoot to carry it through to make communications, and already hundreds of the screen, stage and radio have volunteered their services to labor. It is regarded as the greatest mobilization of talent in the organized labor movement in America.

The message contained in the American people in the AFL appeal for support is made clear in the "free labor" declared:

"The first step toward totalitarianism starts with the shackling of labor. It is so started by dictator under Hitler . . . in Italy under Mussolini. And when government assumes comprehensive control over labor, the complete regimentation of business must follow. It is merely the other side of the same coin. And this is totalitarianism.

"The next few days may decide the destiny of America . . . and with it your future and that of your children. You have the social and economic productive prosperity or another disastrous depression. The choice is yours. It is here.

The pending Taft-Hartley anti-labor program would destroy free unions. It would destroy them. It is you personally it would deny well-recognized rights, impose burdensome restrictions, and lay down strait-jacketing rules. It is not labor alone it is unfair that, if ever enacted, it would surely increase rather than decrease industrial strife. It is designed to destroy labor in the interest of powerful interests and written in a spirit of bitter hostility which is a direct invitation to national disaster.

"The enslavement of the working man in the name of enabling free bargaining among freemen, would be the first step toward the end of freedom of democracy and the champion of freedom—free labor. Free labor's expansion of Communism. It takes free labor to combat the forces of Communism, which always thrives where labor is not free and prosperous. The proposed anti-labor bill would thereby bring industrial unrest and depression to America. It would result in economic chaos of the sort those opposed to the American way of life by using anti-labor as a tool itself could ever hope to deliver. Yes, as an AFL member, you have no use for the hateful doctrines of Communism or any other form of totalitarianism. Only reactionary Fascists would even consider any bill which impairs your security against their will.

"The productive force of free labor brought America victory and prosperity. Have some Americans already forgotten the heroic fight for freedom that labor made both the home and the fighting fronts? Surely, you labor brother and sister, know well how free American labor outfought and outproduced the slave labor hordes of Hitler and Hirohito! Now, in victory, will labor become the slave shackles of slavery?

"The recent 'mandate' from the people of the Congress surely was not a mandate to turn back the clock of human progress. The mandate given grew out of a protest against bureaucracy and continued wartime regimentation. It was a cry for freedom—freedom from the tyranny of bureaucracy and regimentation that the proposed anti-labor legislation would revive."

The message added that "in America everyone who works for a living is 'labor' and that they must resist legislative experiments pointing toward totalitarian control.

Union Labor Insurance Co. Reports Extensive Progress During Last Year

Baltimore, Md.—Remarkable progress in the last year was reported to shareholders of the Union Labor Life Insurance Co., public official of the national labor leaders at the 21st annual meeting of the shareholders here.

Matthew Woll, president of the company, and a vice president of the American Federation of Labor, told the shareholders, in his annual report, that the life insurance institution founded by organized labor had during 1946, the last year of its second decade of existence, attained accomplishments greater than those experienced in any previous years.

In 1946, Mr. Woll reported, the company wrote ordinary and group business in the amount of $62,359,478. This figure amounts to an increase of 12 percent and 238 percent, respectively, of the corresponding 1945 figure. The record had to be had by the end of 1946 a total of $146,-073,266.

Income during the year, Mr. Woll said, was $2,106,324, and during the year the company disbursed $1,665,045 for death claims, disability claims, accident and sickness claims, matured endowments, surrendered values and dividends to policyholders. Net admitted assets were increased by $802,882 to the sum of $6,568,054, and combined contingency reserves, outside of those required by law, were increased to $813,000. The company's combined capital, surplus and contingency reserves amounted to $2,160,754 as of December 31, 1946.

Mr. Woll also reported that the company's simplified formula for group insurance policy-holders had been liberalized considerably to bring it closer to that category of clients, and that liberalizations in other policy-holders would be continued.

Mr. Woll also announced that the company's capital stock had been increased to $675,000, through capitalization of originally contributed surplus, and a cash dividend of 5 percent, amounting to $43,750, was declared to the shareholders, an increase of one half percent over the dividend paid in the year before.

In his address to the shareholders Mr. Woll hailed the efforts of William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor, at the AFL's Chicago Convention in 1946 in which the chief executive had built up set forth objectives in the following language: "We must establish in the United States an economy in which the right of life—old age, illness and injury—is as well established as the right to provide hospitalization and nursing facilities and health services for every man and woman in the United States, to make human life a material and welfare in this nation."

"These statements," Mr. Woll said, "clearly point out the hopes, aims and objectives of the labor management of this country in developing life, accident and health, hospitalization, surgical and medical benefit programs for themselves, their families and dependents."

Leo E. Keller Dies At 54; Editor For Rail Waymen

Detroit.—Leo E. Keller, one of the best-informed men in the railroad labor movement, died here of a heart ailment at the age of 54, after a lifetime devoted largely to the betterment of, sectionmen on the rails.

He knew their problems first hand. Born at Falmouth, Ky., he was literally reared in a "section." His father was a maintenance of way employe who later rose to division roadmaster. At the age of 16, Leo was already working as a sectionman, on the Louisville & Nashville. That was between school terms.

A few years later, he became a fence gang foreman and then an extra gang foreman. He then switched over to the train service for two years, but returned to his old craft as a relief foreman at the Cincinnati Terminal.

A member of the Waymen since his early days, Keller was elected to the division secretary-treasurer in 1919 and three years later was elected to the headquarters as grand lodge statistician. He became Supreme Secretary under President Fred H. Floyd.

Keller was a well-read self-educated, but became a first rate economist, with a great flair for figures and charts. He set workers in an effective, colorful manner. He literally could make statistics "talk." He helped in many a national rail-wage movement.

Just a few weeks ago he was appointed associate editor of the Waymen's "Journal," upon the death of his friend, "Tom" Downie. He was also named director of public relations, and had great plans for promoting the interests of his organization. These were cut short by his death.

AFL Convention Calendar

(Following is a list of conventions scheduled for this year by National and International Unions and State Federations of Labor under the banner of the American Federation of Labor. This list is not complete. Additions will be announced later.)

Date 1947	Organization	Place
May 1	Pennsylvania State Federation of Labor	Harrisburg
May 5	Kansas State Federation of Labor	Wichita
May 11	Wall Paper Craftsmen & Workers International Guild	New York
May 11	Tennessee State Federation of Labor	Cincinnati
May 12	Kentucky State Federation of Labor	Johnson City
May 12	Brotherhood of Railway Clerks	Richmond
May 13	Ohio State Federation of Labor	Cincinnati
May 19	Int. Plate, Printers & Die Stampers	Springfield
May 19	Georgia State Federation of Labor	New York City
May 26	Arkansas State Federation of Labor	Savannah
May 26	Md.-D.C. Federation of Labor	Little Rock
June 9	American Federation of Musicians	Baltimore
June 9	Switchmen's Union of North America	Detroit
June 12	Maine State Federation of Labor	Buffalo
June 14	South Dakota State Federation of Labor	Lewiston
June 16	Grand Lodge Stationary Engineers	Sioux Falls
June 16	Boot and Shoe Workers	Cincinnati
June 16	Int. Ladies' Garment Workers	Cleveland
June 23	Michigan State Federation of Labor	Marquette
June 30	Wisconsin State Federation of Labor	Greenville
June 30	Texas State Federation of Labor	Dallas
July 7	National Brotherhood of Operative Potters	Chicago
July 8	International Association of Longshoremen	New York City
July 14	Washington State Federation of Labor	Seattle
July 14	Int. Ass'n Protective Retail Clerks	San Francisco
July 14	Int. Association Fire Engineers	San Francisco
July 21	International Union Stove Mounters	Kalamazoo
July 21	Int. Union Operating Engineers	Montreal, Can.
July 28	Railroad Yardmasters of America	Portland, Oreg.
*Aug. 4	Nevada State Federation of Labor	Ely
Aug. 4	Arizona State Federation of Labor	San Diego
Aug. 5	Iowa State Federation of Labor	Keokuk
Aug. 11	North Carolina State Federation of Labor	Wilmington
Aug. 11	United Garment Workers of America	Oshkosh, Wis.
Aug. 11	Int. Ass'n Tunnelmen, Chauffeurs	San Francisco
Aug. 16	International Typographical Union	Cleveland, Ohio
Aug. 16	International Union Engravers	Chicago, Ill.
Aug. 18	Wisconsin State Federation of Labor	Green Bay
Aug. 18	Int. Ass'n Machinists	Provo
Sept. 8	Amal. Ass'n Street & Electric Ry.	Los Angeles
Sept. 8	International Chemical Workers	Washington, D. C.
Sept. 8	Nebraska State Federation of Labor	Hastings
Sept. 8	Delaware State Federation of Labor	Bowling Green
Sept. 9	Connecticut State Federation of Labor	Undecided
Sept. 9	United Ass'n Plumbers & Steamfitters	Undecided
Sept. 15	Oklahoma State Federation of Labor	McAlester
Sept. 15	Arizona State Federation of Labor	Tucson
Sept. 15	Int. Union Wood, Wire and Metal Lathers	Los Angeles
Sept. 15	Ohio State Federation of Labor	Akron
Sept. 15	Int. Bro. Pulp, Sulphite & Paper Mill Wks.	Milwaukee
Sept. 16	International Union Mine Workers	Hibbing
Sept. 16	Brotherhood Railroad Trainmen	Miami Beach, Fla.
Sept. 17	New Hampshire State Federation of Labor	Concord
Sept. 20	American Wire Weavers Protective Ass'n	New York City
Sept. 22	Rhode Island State Federation of Labor	Jackson
Sept. 22	Illinois State Federation of Labor	Peoria
Sept. 22	West Virginia State Federation of Labor	Charleston
Sept. 29	Metal Trades Department	San Francisco
Oct. 1	Building and Construction Trades Dept.	San Francisco
Oct. 2	New Mexico State Federation of Labor	Carlsbad
Oct. 2	Union Label Trades Department	San Francisco
Oct. 6	Railway Mail Association	Jacksonville, Fla.
Oct. 6	International Asbestos Workers	Undecided
Oct. 20	Commercial Telegraphers Union	Undecided
Nov. 17	International Automobile Workers	Milwaukee
Dec. 6	International Bill Posters	Chicago

* Date not definitely set.

Substantial Diets and Warm Clothes From AFL Reach Norway and Austria

New York, N. Y.—More substantial diets and clothing than they have had in a long time has been provided to hundreds of workers' families in Norway and Austria by presentation of 4,400 CARE food and clothing packages contributed by the Labor League for Human Rights, official agency of the American Federation of Labor.

Matthew Woll, AFL vice-president and head of the Labor League, announced that packages had been delivered in Oslo and Vienna by trade unionists on leave from their jobs in connection with representatives of CARE (Cooperative for America's Remittances to Europe, Inc.), a non-profit Government-approved organization of which the Labor League is one of 27 member agencies.

In Norway, 200 CARE food packages and 200 blanket parcels went to families of men killed fighting in the resistance movement during the Nazi occupation. In Austria, 2,000 food packages were delivered to those actively engaged in democratic trade union organizations, Mr. Woll said.

Similar Labor League-sponsor contributions are now open to CARE packages, which may be ordered from CARE, 50 Broad Street, New York 4, at $10 each. Available are canned food, blanket cotton and woolen packages. Delivery is guaranteed to needy trade unionists in Austria, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Finland, France, Great Britain (food only), Greece, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Switzerland and Germany (American, British and French Zones and all Berlin).

HARRIMAN ASKS CONGRESS NOT TO CUT TRADE PLAN

Washington, D. C.—Secretary of Commerce W. Averill Harriman warned Congress that any modification of the Administration's trade program would be interpreted abroad as meaning the United States is backing its world responsibilities.

Testifying before the House Ways and Means Committee at a hearing on operation of the reciprocal trade act, Harriman defended the program as essential to an expanded United States economy and pointed out that Congress has approved it four times in the past.

He told the committee that actions of the United States had given great encouragement to foreign nations and that their peoples now are showing grave concern as to what this country may do in the future.

BUYERS WARY AT SHOW OF HOUSEWARE ITEMS

Philadelphia, Pa.—A war of nerves appeared to overshadow the annual National Housewares and Major Appliance Show in the Convention Hall here as buyers appeared quite wary, apparently on the theory that prices for quality merchandise might be lowered if they held out long enough. Manufacturers insisted, however, that the present level would be maintained throughout the show.

AFL GROUP WINS'

Bradford, Pa.—AFL Pulp and Sulfite workers won an NLRB election here at the Northwestern Container Corp. by a vote of 75 to 33.

FACTORY EMPLOYMENT UP BY 70,000 IN FEBRUARY

Washington, D. C.—Factory employment rose 70,000 in February to a total of 15,000,000 persons, the Census Bureau reported. The 15,000, it was revealed in a survey by the Census Bureau, included 5,000 fewer than in January.

This, coupled with a beginning March increase in industrial output and activity, caused total employment to increase slightly to 58,300,000.

Factory employment usually jumps in the construction industry, USES Director Robert C. Goodwin reported.

"Gains also are likely in the heavy goods industries and their trade outlets. Increases in manufacturing employment in February were concentrated in the durable goods groups, with the largest gains in industries which added more than 30,000 workers. Smaller gains were also reported in iron and-steel, machinery, nonferrous metals and transportation group. 'February reports from 32 major labor market areas showed that three reporting substantial employment declines—Detroit, Chicago, and Evansville, Ind."

AFL WORKERS GET RAISE

Chicago, Ill.—Approximately 16,000 members of the American Federation of Labor employed in factories in the International Harvester Co. have been offered a pay increase of 11½ cents an hour and six holidays with pay.

SHORT WAGES HURT HEALTH

New York City.—Inadequate wages are also imposing an increasingly difficult problem upon public health departments throughout the Nation, Dr. C. E. A. Winslow, editor of The American Journal of Public Health, declared here.

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AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE
SUPPLEMENT

WILLIAM GREEN, President — WASHINGTON, D. C., FRIDAY, MAY 2, 1947 — GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer

Write Your Senators And Congressman To Fight Anti-Labor Bills

Pepper Warns Senate Anti-Union Bill Threatens Nation's Entire Economy

Washington, D. C.—Grave warning that anti-labor legislation before Congress would strike at employers as well as employes and seriously threaten the Nation's entire economic structure was sounded by Senator Pepper of Florida as he took the floor of the Senate to vigorously assail the Taft-Hartley proposals to impose chains on the American working class.

"This drastic anti-labor legislation, in my opinion, strikes not only at the rights of labor, not only at the wage scale of the workers of America, not only at the living conditions of the toiling people of *our* country, not only at the purchasing power of our workers, but strikes a major blow, as did the same policy in the early 1920's, at the whole prosperity of the American economy," Senator Pepper declared.

"It strikes at the employer as well as the employe, it strikes at the farmer as well as the city worker."

Asserting the Taft anti-union bill presented to the Senate contained "nothing except a series of prohibitions, the net effect of which would be practically to destroy the power of collective bargaining now enjoyed by labor unions," Senator Pepper declared:

"I believe it is the judgment of moderate men in the labor movement, with many of whom I have talked, and men whose names are associated with reasonableness, fairness and moderation in the conduct of union affairs, that the effect of the bill—especially as I daresay it will be when it is augmented by amendments such as that now pending and similar others to be proposed—will be to destroy what the labor unions so that they cannot effectively preserve the principle of collective bargaining for the workers. When we break the power of a labor union to protect workers in collective bargaining, it inevitably that the employer will beat down the wages of the workers.

"That means that their purchasing power would be diminished, that the whole economy will suffer, because they cannot buy the products of our factories, the produce of our farms and the services which are made available by the people of this country."

Senator Pepper cited the warning contained in the minority report from the labor committee which said:

"Labor has earned all the industry of those who, drawing to themselves in over-increasing shares of the Nation's wealth, succeeded with the help of congressional allies in liquidating many of the popular protections which labor had won in the hard fought battle of the bulge' against workers' liens and best protections their trade unions. In the name of 'fairness,' many of them would give more to those who have, and less to those who have not; in the name of 'equality,' they would increase maldistribution of wealth, unsurrender as protested against monopoly; they would weaken the remaining barrier to concentration of industrial power. Enough of their position is included in this bill to make it but one further example of a determination to resurrect those mistakes of 1920-29, which led inevitably to the horrors of 1929-32."

Mr. Pepper told the Senate that it was "no accident" that President Truman, in a message to Congress, expressed belief that the Congress should deal with the problem of labor monopoly as it exists in the United States today.

In his every statement on the subject it is affirmed that today monopoly is at an all-time peak in the concentration of power, and that wages and profits are higher than they have ever been before," Senator Pepper asserted. "Not only that, but in the final quarter of 1946, 625 companies earned $250,000,000, or about 1/3rd of their earning rate during the war years. These figures come from the latest Federal Reserve bulletin. We are told that total corporate profits in 1946 were $12,000,000,000 as compared with $9,000,000,000 in the war years.

"It is perfectly apparent that there is strength in the hands of the people's share of the national income. It is my belief, and it is the opinion of many men wiser than I, that, if we pass legislation of the fundamental character of the proposal before us, we shall destroy the collective bargaining power of the workers that have been built up through the decline of workers' wages, which will inevitably drop the living standards of the American working man and his family, but the whole economy of the American people, who enjoy the highest living they have had in all their history."

AFL Auto Union Price Poll Shows Little Urge to Buy Until Costs Drop

Washington, D. C.—Workers are holding off buying automobiles, clothes and home furnishings, if a recent quarterly poll made by the United Automobile Workers (AFL) is any indication.

The question presented by the union was: "Are you holding off the buying of needed items such as a car, clothing or home furnishings until prices come down?"

The answers, it was revealed by Lester Washburn, International President of the UAW-AFL, indicate that more than 10 times as many members of that union were deferring their purchases as had been buying in the automotive field, because of high prices for both new and used cars.

For the same reason, more than 13 times as many as had been buying home furnishings had ceased purchases in this field, the survey showed, and the union members reported also that they will not purchase clothes until prices have been lowered to a "reasonable basis." The persons who reported they are not buying clothing now were seven times as many as those who said they were purchasing.

The persons not buying cars at this time, and who will continue to wait for "a more reasonable pricing situation," the union reported, is 91 percent. Eighty-eight percent of those interviewed said they are not buying clothing, and 93 percent declared they are not interested in home furnishings at present prices.

Shipbuilders Are Reported Shunning New Pay Talks

Washington, D. C.—Leading shipbuilders of the United States again have appeared to boycott a Government appeal for a wage settlement proposed by the country's Shipbuilders Stabilization Committee to break a strike "in the seams" of scores of hundred thousand workers in private shipyards.

The session had been arranged when it became quite evident that the determination of the employer action was increasingly important if stable labor conditions were to be maintained in the industry.

But the delegation that met they were unable to act because of the lack of a quorum of the board of management.

Out of 12 representatives of management on the committee, only three showed up. A previous meeting in January was similarly boycotted.

That action was sharply criticized by President John P. Frey of the AFL Metal Trades Department, who is also a principal labor member of the committee.

It revealed that the committee was set up during the war to stabilize wages in the shipyards, and that labor cooperated fully with it. Back in 1942, he said, shipyard labor accepted a substantially smaller wage increase than was entitled to in order to help the war effort.

In return, he said, managements agreed to an annual review of wages in the shipyards. But now, he said, that the war those promises have not been kept. Despite repeated requests from Government officials, the shipbuilders themselves have never called meetings which were called to consider a wage increase.

"This action of the managements in the shipbuilding industry is a flagrant violation their contract with us," Mr. Frey declared.

The Metal Trades unions do not intend to be "pushed around," the official indicated, but will continue the fight for improved standards for men in the shipbuilding industry.

One of the next moves will be the resumption of direct negotiations with West Coast shipbuilders on May 12 for a 25-cent-an-hour increase to almost 150,000 shipyard workers on the coast.

These negotiations started earlier in the year, but were recessed pending efforts by Federal authorities to head off the threat in the Shipbuilding Stabilization Committee.

Large Participation Is Reported In Training For Building Trades

Washington, D. C.—There were 46,924 establishments participating in building trades apprenticeship with 2,256 local apprenticeship programs on April 1, the Apprenticeship Training Service at the Labor Department announced. Since the end of the war apprenticeship has been expanding and both of the April 1 totals are new high records.

On January 1, ATS had record of 44,941 establishments participating in apprenticeship with 2,206 local and 2,067 local apprenticeship programs. These programs cover a city or area and were established by joint committees, equally representative of contractor organizations and unions.

The woodworking trades maintained the lead with 11,943 establishments with approximately 400 programs on April 1, as compared to 10,984 and 400 on January 1.

"Employers and unions are showing wise foresight in expanding apprenticeship in the building trades," William F. Patterson, Director of the Apprentice-Training Service said.

"This is especially true at this time because of industry is doing much to develop and maintain a high standard of skill in the building trades, employers and unions also are increasing the opportunities for youth to learn a skilled trade," he declared.

Pennsy Balloting Concluded; Big Task of Counting Starts

Philadelphia, Pa.—After nearly a month of balloting, National Mediation Board crews this week were up to the big collective bargaining election among 50,000 shopmen on the Pennsylvania.

Those voting by mail still have a few days to get in their ballots. However, the job of counting the returns will be a long one.

First, mediators must check the signatures on the outer envelopes of all mail ballots against names in eight big books which make up the union's payroll. This is done to guard against "stuffing."

That will take at least a week. After that, the ballots will be dumped in with those cast at the polls, and then the National Mediation Board officials estimated the final tally will be available until the second week in May.

HELP PROVIDED BY STATE FOR CENTRALIA VICTIMS' KIN

Springfield, Ill.—Families of the 111 men who died in the Centralia mine disaster have been awarded a total of $550,120 by the State Industrial Commission. The awards are to be paid by the Centralia Coal Co., owner of the mine, and details of making the payments are being worked out.

MISHAPS TAKE BIG TOLL OF NATION'S YOUNGSTERS

America has gone a long way in reducing deaths from diseases of childhood, but accidents still take a staggering toll among the "tots," it was pointed out this week by Miss Katherine Lenroot, chief of the U. S. Children's Bureau.

In fact, accidents are now the leading cause of deaths among children, Miss Lenroot declared. For that reason, she said, the Bureau in cooperation with other agencies is conducting an educational campaign to "rouse parents to the need for greater caution in the home."

DISPATCHERS UPHELD BY EMERGENCY BOARD

Washington, D. C.—The right of the Train Dispatchers to represent their own chief dispatchers on another railroad, the Louisville & Nashville, was upheld by an Emergency Board.

Unanimously, the three-man board backed the position of the Dispatchers that the union rule in its agreement with the L. & N. should be broadened to include the above position.

The National Mediation Board had previously certified the union as bargaining agent for chief dispatchers on the line, but the carrier claimed they are "supervisors" and therefore not entitled to recognize the certification. This dispute was referred to the board in controversy to an Emergency Board.

PATTERN MAKERS WIN

Philadelphia, Pa.—Wage negotiations have been concluded here between the Budd Co. and the Pattern Makers League of North America (AFL), the agreement becoming effective immediately. Wage increases amounted to 11½ cents an hour, in addition to 3½ cents in the form of six paid holidays a year.

GARMENT WORKERS DONATE $225,000 TO JEWISH CAUSE

New York City.—The International Ladies Garment Workers Union (AFL), has contributed a check for $225,000 to the United Jewish Appeal 1947 campaign, it was announced at a rally of the Millinery Workers Union (AFL), in Manhattan Center.

Henry Morgenthau, Jr., national chairman of the drive, appealed for a 70 percent minimum increase over last year's contributions, asserting that the cause was "a matter of life and death."

He praised the role of organized labor in the rescue campaign and asserted that displaced persons in Europe were receiving less aid pending the drive for funds here.

"I don't know what we're going to do to convince the United Nations that the American Jews are going to support their people in Europe and in Palestine," he declared.

The amount of $00 pledged to double its $2,000 donation of last year.

Mr. Morgenthau also told the meeting he was opposed to proposed labor legislation.

"I want to go on record," he said, "that I condemn as forcefully as I know how the present Congress labor bills."

The national goal of the appeal is $170,000,000, of which $65,000,000 has been set as New York City's share. Alan Rose, secretary-treasurer of the joint board of the millinery group, was chairman of the meeting.

AFL In N. Y. Seeks 40-Hour Work Plan For Hospital Aides

New York City.—Calling a 40-hour week a "necessity" for the "mental and physical health" of New York City Hospital Employes, Walter S. Pasnick, special representative of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employes (AFL), sent a letter to Mayor William O'Dwyer, urging that the city exercise powers to put employes of the Department of Hospitals on a 5-day, 40-hour week plan as soon as possible.

In his letter, Mr. Pasnick painted a picture of hospital employes whose duties are described as "working in sordid surroundings, coming in contact with contagious diseases, their long standard squeezed between their low wages and the ever-increasing cost of living."

Conceding that a bill to that effect had been introduced at the AFL Central Labor Council, Mr. Pasnick by Councilman Louis P. Goldberg, Mr. Pasnick made the point that while the 40-hour week "should be guaranteed to all employes by law, just as the 8-hour day was," the administration bill would not for legislative "technicalities" to be met.

2,000 BAKERY WORKERS IN ILLINOIS GET RAISE

Springfield, Ill.—A new wage agreement granting 12½ cents hourly increase to more than 2,000 wholesale bakery employes in 33 downstate Illinois cities has been announced by bakery operators and union officials. The union had asked for 18 cents.

The contract was signed by the chairman of the negotiating committee representing the employers and an international representative of the AFL Bakery and Confectionery Workers' union.

LIVING COSTS AT RECORD

Washington, D. C.—The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that living costs in mid-March were at an all-time high. They were 50 percent higher than a year ago, almost 40 percent above the level of January, 1941, and 27 percent higher than before the war. The purchasing power of the prewar dollar has thus shrunk to less than 64 cents.

Talks of Merging AFL and CIO Suspended For Further Study

Both Labor Groups United In Stand Opposing Vicious Anti-Union Bills

Washington, D. C.—The initial peace meetings between the American Federation of Labor and the CIO ended without a definite agreement, but with an expressed determination by both sides to explore further the possibilities of bringing about a merger in the near future.

At the same time, the conferees expressed a unanimous determination to fight for the prevention of the enactment of pending anti-labor legislation by Congress.

It was officially revealed that the CIO had refused to accept a sweeping AFL proposal for the immediate return of its affiliates to the American Federation of Labor "as is"—a proposal which would have cemented a united labor movement in America without delay.

The text of the brief, but effective, AFL plan follows:

"It is proposed:

"(1) That the national unions of the CIO affiliate with the AFL on the same basis as the United Mine Workers of America—i.e. come in as they are now organized with full membership.

"(2) That this jointure be complete and effective as of the date of the October Constitutional Convention of the AFL, with full privileged participation by the delegates from the now existent CIO national unions.

"(3) That this entire joint committee of 10 retain its functioning status ad interim, for the purpose of:

"(a) Implementing the new policy by adjustment of details and drafting memorandum on all matters of recurring importance.

"(b) To pool the influence and resources of both organizations in the political arena, whenever for the purpose of fighting the enactment of pending legislation, designed to weaken the economic position of America's wage earners, destroy their unions and bargaining rights, and to impose comparative serfdom on free men."

The CIO rejected this proposal offer and countered with one of its own which contemplated "organizational unity" to fight anti-labor legislation at once, but deferred any concrete action toward a real merger of the two organizations until some indefinite time after a long series of conferences would be met. This proposal was not accepted by the AFL Executive Committee.

The peace committees representing both sides then united in endorsing a joint statement which pledged unanimity in general views, but remained indefinite as to actual accomplishment of peace aims. This statement was accompanied by verbal explanations by AFL President William Green and CIO President Philip Murray that the peace conferences would be explored further at future conferences to be held sometime within the next two months at the convenience of the participants.

The text of the joint statement follows:

"It is the unanimous opinion of the representatives of the CIO and the American Federation of Labor that organic unity should be established within the American labor movement.

"We are firmly convinced that the economic, social and material interests of labor can best be served through the establishment of a united labor movement. This decision is prompted by the grave political, economic, social and industrial life. It is the responsibility of labor to lay a sound foundation upon which a superstructure of organic unity can be erected.

"In order to accomplish this purpose we are in full accord with the details incidental to the formation and gaining rights, and to impose comparative serfdom on free men."

"We will deal with this and other mutual problems at future meetings of the two organizations hereto named. We shall devote our energies and purposes toward the realization of this common objective.

"In the meantime, we shall continue our efforts to prevent the enactment of highly objectionable anti-labor legislation now being considered in the Congress of the United States."

The conferences between the AFL and CIO Peace Committees lasted three hours before the indefinite adjournment.

Proposed Immigration Law Change Vigorously Rapped By AFL Speaker

Washington, D. C.—Vigorous opposition to a proposal for important changes in the Immigration Law was presented by Walter J. Mason, National Legislative Representative of the American Federation of Labor, before the House Judiciary Committee.

Declaring that the measure under consideration would permit the U. S. Attorney General to suspend deportation of unwanted immigrants and facilitate congress for a period of six months at his own discretion, Mr. Mason asserted:

"We are not in favor of placing this power in the hands of any single individual, but feel that except in case of an alien who is outside the United States, such power should be considered in either the Senate or the House Judiciary Committee.

"This amendment would limit the fair hearing now guaranteed by the First Amendment to the Constitution to petition the government for redress of grievances. This amendment gives discretionary power over thousands of persons placed in the hands of the Attorney General by this bill. We feel that as an ultimate check on this power, aliens must not be denied ultimate consideration by Congress."

In conclusion, Mr. Mason said:

"The American Federation of Labor feels that provision should be made in this bill, deportation of aliens of enemy countries who have been in service to the United States and whose lives would be endangered by their deportation. Special consideration should be given to displaced persons who will be subjected to racial, religious or political persecution if returned to their country of origin and whose presence here is not inimical to the best interests of our country. Consideration should be given to illegal entrants and no absolute time limit should be placed upon full enforcement of the immigration laws.

"Illegal entrants who have rendered secondary preference as allowed to Displaced Persons should be charged to quota which is unabscribed by legal entrants. Private bills should be permitted as an ultimate check upon administrative discretionary powers."

NO WALL STREET STRIKE

New York, N. Y.—The threat of a Wall Street strike disappeared when the United Financial Employes (AFL) and the New York Stock and Curb Exchanges renewed their contracts.

KRAFT FOODS CUTS PRICES

Chicago, Ill.—The Kraft Foods Co. announced price reductions of 6 to 7 cents a pound on various types of American process cheese and 7 cents a pound on margarine.

Anti-Labor Moves in Many Countries Is Deplored By British Government

London.—Repressive labor legislation planned in other nations was decried in a May Day manifesto issued by the British Labor Government when it appealed for international unity of workers "to defeat the unprincipled forces of reaction."

Issued by the National Council of Labor, representing the British Labor party, the Trades Union Congress and the Labor Cooperative Union, during powers behind the Labor government, the manifesto declared that repressive labor legislation apparently was directed at the United States.

This was the first official reference by the T. U. C. and the Labor Party to the labor laws in force in America, although union leaders have frequently criticized them in their labor developments in the United States.

The manifesto also noted that the working-class movement in various countries was "under attack" and said that "elsewhere, under reactionary governments, the forms of democratic behind the pretense of free self-government, the rights of the exploited and their rights of trade-union organization and free citizenship are denied them."

The apparent reference to the United States was made in this sentence:

"Even in industrially advanced countries, where democratic organization is strong, repressive legislation to destroy this freedom is being planned.

"To the workers thus beset and to the peoples of all nations we appeal for their freedom, security and peace, British labor, for its part, is pledged with a pledge of its full cooperation and the task of building a world in which justice to the common man will be the cornerstone."

The manifesto said the "achievements" of the British Labor government would be an "example and inspiration to workers throughout the world. Then, referring to the "difficulties" of the working classes in Britain today, the manifesto said:

"After consultation with responsible ministers, the trade unions are using their influence to secure the cooperative and fruitful cooperation of management, confident that labor will do so with mutual confidence and a higher standard of working for the nation."

In its plea for international worker unity, the manifesto said:

"The National Council of Labor calls upon the organizations of labor in other countries to give their energetic support to the efforts we are making in this country and in this world at imperialist domination of capitalist exploitation, in which the class will everywhere be defeated."

BUFFALO BUILDING UNITS GRANTED INCREASED WAGE

Buffalo, N. Y.—More than 20,000 workers have been awarded a boost in wages by the Building and Construction Trades Council of this city. The increase is effective for a one-year contract providing a 15-cent hourly pay raise. This increase represents a compromise between the union's demand for a 25-cent increase and the contractors' original offer of 10 cents.

CARPENTERS' ANNIVERSARY

St. Louis, Mo.—More than 1,800 members and guests of Local 8 of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters (AFL) here, celebrated their 64th anniversary of the Union's organization.

CHATTANOOGA CARPENTERS GRANTED 10-CENT RAISE

Chattanooga, Tenn.—AFL carpenters here in the heavily industrialized area of Chattanooga have been awarded a 10-cent hourly increase raises the scale from $1.55 to $1.65 an hour and will be included in all future contracts for home construction. Contracts now being carried out are not affected. The agreement was expected to aid settlement of disputes in other building crafts.

STOPPAGES AT LOW LEVEL

Washington, D. C.—The Bureau of Labor Statistics official figures show that work stoppages during the first quarter of this year were at the lowest level since the end of the war.